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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to incorporate the study of geography into a ninth grade world history class with the aim of improving student awareness of the influence of geography upon the historical development of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. By means of a questionnaire and map tests it was determined that ninth grade world history students had little awareness of geography upon historical development in ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, and could not locate those places regarded as being historically significant in either of those two ancient civilizations. During the course of implementation, students became acquainted with how to read maps, locate important sites, and describe how geographic features factor into determining the location of those sites. Furthermore, through the preparation of both oral and written presentations, particularly the creation of a mythological country, students applied what they learned. Analysis of post-test data indicated that, as a result of all the exercises connected with implementing this practicum, students came away with an adequate grasp of those rather consistent geographic variables which influence historical development. (Author)

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Improving The Awareness Of The Influence Of Geography Upon Historical Events In Ancient Mesopotamia And In Ancient Egypt In Ninth Grade World History Students

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by

Henry Milton

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1992

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

April 7, 1992
Date of Final Approval
of Report

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ABSTRACT

Improving The Awareness Of The Influence Of Geography Upon Historical Events In Ancient Mesopotamia And In Ancient Egypt In Ninth Grade World history Students. Milton, Henry.,1992: Practicum I Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Descriptors: Class Activities/Classroom Techniques/Cooperative Education/Egypt/Mesopotamia/Geography Instruction/Grade 9/Global Approach/History Instruction/Lesson Plans/Secondary Education/Social Studies/World History.

This practicum was designed to incorporate the study of geography into a ninth grade world history with the aim of improving a student's awareness of the influence of geography upon the historical development of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. By means of a questionnaire and map tests prepared by the writer, it was determined that ninth grade world history students had little awareness of the influence of geography upon historical development in ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, and could not locate those places regarded as being historically significant in either of those two ancient civilizations.

During the course of implementation, students became acquainted with how to read maps, locate important sites, and describe how geographic features factor into determining the location of those sites. Furthermore, through the preparation of both oral and written presentations, particularly the creation of a mythological country, students applied what they learned.

Analysis of post-test data indicate that, as a result of all the exercises connected with implementing this practicum, students came away with an adequate grasp of those rather consistent geographic variables which influence historical development.

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Henry B. Milton
Henry B. Milton

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The initial classroom setting around which this report revolved existed within a large public secondary school, grades 9 through 12, with a total student population of 2,154 located on the periphery of the inner city of a large culturally diverse metropolis, located in the southeast portion of the United States. The physical plant was 19 years old and was in need of exterior cosmetic attention. The interior condition was in good repair. Within the total student population, 17% were white, 13% were Hispanic and 70% were people of color. While there were not specific figures available, it was known that the larger community consisted essentially of lower-middle to middle class, blue collar working families, many of whom were headed by a single parent. Again, while specific figures were not available, it was known that a significant number of households headed by a single parent were dependent to some degree upon public assistance to meet day-to-day living expenses.

The immediate neighborhood in which the school was located was residential, consisting essentially of single story, multiple family public housing apartment complexes,

most of which appeared to be in need of at least cosmetic repair. They were separated by asphalt covered space which was used for parking lots.

Within 3/4 of a mile of the school were located seven large shopping malls, consisting primarily of budget and discount oriented stores, two rather large supermarkets and four used car dealerships. The population of the immediate community was estimated to be 16,000 while the total population of the greater community was estimated to be close to 250,000.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The actual class who were the focus of this report consisted of 23 ninth grade World History students. World History is mandatory for all those in the ninth grade and is not an elective. Of the 23 students, the average age was 14 years. The male students numbered 13 and the female 10. Fourteen students were people of color, 3 were Hispanic and 6 were white. English is not the native language for 5 of the 23 students.

The writer was the World History teacher for these 23 students. The writer was subject to the immediate authority of the Social Studies Department Chairman and, in turn, was under the administrative jurisdiction of one Vice Principal and, ultimately, the Principal. The writer served in no

other capacity except that of classroom teacher and had no immediate responsibilities beyond that of instruction.

The writer is a native of California, having attended and graduated from public schools in Oakland. He received his Bachelor of Arts from San Francisco State University with a major in history and holds a Master of Science in Education from the University of Southern Maine.

Within the classroom the writer was bound by, but not limited to, the instructional mandates as contained within the official Curriculum Framework. The basic textbook was prescribed, but each instructor was allowed, indeed encouraged to provide additional materials and experiences which would enhance learning beyond minimal expectations. To that end, maps, overhead projections and films were provided by the School; the extent of their use was left to the discretion of each instructor.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

When presented with a map of ancient Mesopotamia and a map of ancient Egypt, students were unable to locate and identify the most historically significant sites. Furthermore, students could not accurately describe the influence geography had upon the historical development in ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. The 23 students in the writer's ninth grade World History class lacked sufficient knowledge which would enable them to locate and identify sites that are regarded as having historical significance. These same students also lacked the knowledge necessary to describe the role geography has played in the historical development of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt.

The 23 ninth grade students in this writer's World History class were not geographically literate in terms of being able to locate historically significant sites in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt in terms of being able to describe the influence geography played in the historical development of these two civilizations.

Problem Documentation

Evidence of this dilemma is clearly indicated when the results of the multiple choice survey questionnaire "The Influence of Geography Upon the History of Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt" (see Table 1), the results of the Map Test of Ancient Mesopotamia (see Table 2), and the results of the Map Test of Ancient Egypt (see Table 3) are analyzed. On a multiple choice survey questionnaire (See Appendix A) designed to assess a student's knowledge about the influence of geography upon historical development in the ancient worlds of Mesopotamia and Egypt, the average score was seven correct out of 15 questions. On two separate maps, one of Ancient Mesopotamia (See Appendix D) and the other of Ancient Egypt (See Appendix E) students were asked to locate and identify a total of 21 sites regarded as historically significant (See Appendices B and C). The average score was 9 correct out of 15 questions.

Table 1

Number of Students Having Correct Responses on "The Influence of Geography Upon the History of Ancient Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt "

	Essence of the Actual Question	Out of 23 Students, The Number of Students Having the Correct Response
1.	The principle demographic reason for Ur becoming a major center of population in ancient Mesopotamia	7
2.	One of the commercial reasons why Babylon became the capital of the Old Babylonian Empire.	5
3.	The central demographic reason why maintaining and controlling the Old Babylonian Empire was difficult.	5
4.	What natural conditions made the delta region of the Nile difficult to militarily defend.	4
5.	The principle geographic reason why the unification of the Upper and Lower Nile kingdoms was more easily accomplished than the unification of the city-states in the Old Babylonian Empire.	4
6.	What geographic conditions influenced the decision to chose Thebes as the capitol of a unified Egypt.	9
7.	Why the annual flooding of the Nile provided ancient Egyptians with a sense of permanence and security.	8
8.	Why geographic conditions accounted for the royal mortuary temples in the Valley of the Kings being located on the west bank of the Nile.	6
9.	The greatest natural protection for ancient Egyptians.	9
10.	The natural conditions which led to the development of independent kingdoms in ancient Mesopotamia.	8
11.	The geographic conditions that influenced the size of city-states in ancient Egypt.	8
12.	Those geographic attributes which contributed to Memphis being a center of culture and commerce in ancient Egypt.	5
13.	The principle explanation for why the ancient Egyptian civilization lasted as long as it did.	10

Table 2

Number of Students Having Correct Responses on Map Test of Ancient Mesopotamia

Location	Out of 23 Students, The Number of Students Having the Correct Response
Ur	4
Susa	2
Euphrates River	10
Assyria	5
Niniveh	3
Akkad	1
Babylon	9
Tigris River	12
Syria	9
Babylonia	7
Sumer	5

Table 3

Number of Students Having Correct Responses on the Map Test of Ancient Egypt

Location	Out of 23 Students, The Number of Students Having the Correct Response
Thebes	5
Abydos	2
Memphis	9
Libya	12
Nubia	3
Valley of the Kings	4
Akhetaton	1
Nile River	18
Luxor	4
Karnak	4

Causative Analysis

The results of an informal conversational survey of three history teachers who teach history in 3 of the 5 middle schools from which the present ninth grade class comes, indicated that the textbooks prescribed by the school district and used by students in grade 6 and in grade 8 lack an adequate analysis of the influence geography upon historical development. Furthermore, these same three middle school history teachers concluded that each text presented insufficient information from which students could draw inferences regarding the manner in which geography influenced things historical in the ancient worlds of Mesopotamia and Egypt. In addition, because of the general lack of awareness regarding how historical developments might have been influenced by things geographic, students are not inclined to independently pursue the exploration of the relationship between geography and historical development.

The results of another informal conversational survey, this time of 3 different eighth grade teachers who also teach history in 3 of the 5 middle schools from which the ninth grade class comes, revealed that all 3 were inclined to follow the direction of the prescribed textbook and teach history from an interpretative perspective, favoring the chronological /event approach over the more broader spatial/topical approach. Furthermore, in even more specific

terms, all 3 teachers indicated they received no direct training about how to integrate things geographic into a history class which would enable students to understand the manner in which historical events are influenced by things geographic.

There is no specific Performance Standard in the official school district Ninth Grade World History Curriculum Framework which describes how to particularly address this dilemma. Without such itemized direction, the difficulty only intensifies and perpetuates itself. At the same time, there is nothing to suggest or in any way indicate that this matter has any degree of importance or urgency to it, therefore NOT providing the teacher with an adequate indication as to the necessity of this issue receiving the attention it should.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

While there may be several explanations as to the reasons why geographic illiteracy exists, all seem to revolve around two central points. One point suggests that ill-informed decisions by those who plan the content of curriculum for schools is essentially the reason why things geographic have lost their importance. The other point suggests that it is really a matter of biological evolution.

In separate studies, both Stoltman (1989) and Mayo (1989) indicate that the reasons for the reduction in the

importance of things geographic are due primarily to ill-advised decisions by curriculum planners. Stoltman mentions that "American secondary school students are provided few opportunities to study geography" (Stoltman, 1989, p. 9) principally because the total curriculum has become too crowded, making it necessary to eliminate some subjects and consolidate others: geography got the axe. Stoltman (1989) goes on to indicate that elementary and middle school curriculums are not adequately preparing students to study geography at the secondary level only providing curriculum planners with increased justification to cut anything connected with geography from the curriculum. Although there was renewed interest in geography with the High School Geography project in the late 1970's, teachers and administrators lost interest because the props and artifacts as well as the housekeeping and inventory requirements simply made matters too cumbersome. These factors, closely following the fact that in the late 1960's and 1970's, "geography was no longer a requirement of college admissions" (Stoltman, 1989, p. 10), further decreased the importance of anything dealing with geography.

Research by Mayo (1989) simply adds to the findings of Stoltman. Mayo's studies indicate that when it comes to the actual teaching of social studies in general and history in particular in the classroom,"the chronological approach is favored over the spatial approach" (Mayo, 1989, p.10) thus favoring an approach which addresses the order of events

rather than an approach which might focus upon those more fundamental elements which serve as the cause. Mayo (1989) goes on to mention that the importance of things geographic has been so long missing from the curriculum that today administrators and curriculum planners, particularly at the elementary and middle school level, simply do not fully understand what geography is and what it should encompass. An earlier work by Goldin and Thordyke (1981) mentions the importance of acquiring spatial knowledge, but, alas, it is simply not valued today; hence, disciplines like geography will bear the brunt.

This research alone may help explain why there are not specific and detailed items mentioned in the aforementioned Performance Standards of the official Ninth Grade World History Curriculum Framework which would precisely delineate those categorical particulars which could help establish a firm direction and thus provide the specific topics a teacher could utilize to integrate geography into a world history course.

It was mentioned earlier that an informal discussion with three teachers of eighth grade history revealed that no one had received any sort of proper training or instruction regarding how things geographic ought to be integrated into a history course. A study by Woodring (1983) suggests that any bad habits students have concerning how to identify and describe the role of geography in historical development, they may well have learned from their teachers, as many of

today's social studies teachers were never taught the importance of geography in the history courses they took in college.

In textbooks, the amount of attention given to analyzing the role geography has played in historical development is another variable requiring further attention. Newitt (1984) suggests that the amount of attention paid to an historical event and\or civilization in a textbook is due more to the economic impact of that event than anything else, again resulting in a decrease in the amount of attention paid to things geographic. To a degree, this may help explain why the teachers mentioned above would find the textbook each uses lacking sufficient information necessary for students to make inferences as to the influence of things geographic upon historical development. In another study Wycoff (1979) attempts to make the case that geography has received minor to obscure attention in textbooks because there are an abundance of widely read novels that already do that.

A rather interesting study by Brussiere (1980) suggests that the reduction in the importance of things geographic in education is due largely to America's inordinate, almost obsessive, desire to make everything and everybody the same; "to locate the commonalties among diverse cultures so as not to offend any modern descendents" (Brussiere, 1980, p. 44). To mention cultural heritage is, by necessity, to refer to different world-wide geographical regions. The end result is a diminishing in the importance of things geographic.

One of the most intriguing explanations for the demise in the amount of attention paid to geography was a study by Ornstein and Ehrlich (1989). Their study operates on the premise that "the human nervous system has evolved to select only a small extract of reality and ignore the rest." (Ornsten and Ehrlich, 1989, p. 545). What humankind's nervous system is ignoring is information about different cultures, past and present. Both authors suggest that humankind's ability to change the world is outstripping its ability to understand it. In short, humankind is changing the world at a rapid pace, but without any understanding or appreciation of the legacy, heritage or contributions made by previous cultures. The conclusions of Ornsten and Ehrlich (1989) are addressed further, albeit unintentionally, in a study by McConaghy (1990) when he mentions that it is crucial that Man understand thoroughly his inheritance as he creates the changes he does. By definition this underscores the importance of appreciating the influence of geography upon historical development.

While there may be a good deal of merit, coupled with adequate supportive evidence, as demonstrated above, to the argument that the relative unimportance of things geographic is due to ill-advised and poor planning on the part of those who influence the development of curricula, there seems also to be enough evidence to suggest that the curriculum planners are simply responding to the status quo, to the reality of existing attitudes. One could make the argument that those

who are directly involved in the development of curricula ought to be more foresighted and creative, but that is beyond the scope of this proposal. If there is some truth to the position that those who plan the curricula for American education merely reflect the attitudes and values that make up the status quo, it begs a larger question: What is the source of the present attitude regarding the development of an appreciation for the influence of geography upon human affairs in general and certainly, for the purposes of this proposal, upon significant historical developments in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt in particular. Perhaps the separate studies of Leslie (1988) and Grosvenor (1985) address this issue best. Leslie (1988) suggests that present cultural attitudes are extremely here-and-now oriented; attitudes about the past as well as the future are rather casual and nonchalant. His comments seem to reflect the earlier comments by Grosvenor (1985) who indicated the lack of attention paid to things geographic is really quite simple: "Everything from 'over there' is now 'over here' so why bother knowing anything about 'over there' ?" (Grosvenor, 1985, p. 205).

Separate studies by Salter (1988) and Natoli (1988) indicate that things geographic need to be an integral part of any good history course, for only then can an accurate and proper perspective be established for examining the contributions different civilizations have made to the whole of humankind.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was that every student possess the knowledge and skills necessary to locate 21 of those places generally accepted and regarded as having significant historical value in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt and be able to demonstrate an understanding of the influence of things geographic upon the historical development of these civilizations.

Behavioral Objectives

The first behavioral objective concerned itself with the ability to locate sites that are generally regarded as having historical significance. Specifically, on two different maps, one of ancient Mesopotamia and the other of ancient Egypt, the goal was for students to be able to locate and identify 17 of the 21 sites held to be of historical prominence.

The second behavioral objective concerned itself with the acquisition of sufficient knowledge so as to accurately describe the impact and contribution things geographic have had upon upon the historical development of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. Specifically, the goal was for students to be able to describe the role of a) fertile soil, b) water, c) climatic cycles, and d) unique topographical and geographical features [density of forests, height of mountains, etc.] in determining the location and development of sites in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt regarded as having historical significance.

The third objective concerned itself with the assimilation of knowledge learned about geography and map reading with historical outcomes. Specifically, from one list containing the geographic facts, and another list containing the demographic statistics of a mythical country, the goal was for students to describe the manner in which geography would influence what each perceives would be the political structure, social/cultural institutions and economic practices of that mythological country between 3000 BC and 1500 BC.

Measurement of Objectives

The measurement of the first objective planned to have students locate on two maps, one of ancient Mesopotamia (see Appendix D) and the other of ancient Egypt (see Appendix E), 17 of 21 key historical sites regarded as having historical significance (see Appendices B and C). The selection of this particular measurement is significant in that it is important for students to be able to locate in what part of the world these events occured. History does not just happen; it happens in a place. It is equally important for students to understand and internalize the notion that though the events discussed may be in the past, the locations where they occurred are not. The names or even political boundaries may have changed, but the actual place is still there. It was planned for this measurement to help add perspective and breadth to what the study of history is all about.

The measurement of the second objective planned to have each student, functioning within a group, contribute to the role of one of five specific period characters each group assumed. Each character had a particular mission to fulfill and a spokesperson for each group planned to make a 10 minute oral presentation in which he or she analyzed, described, and defended the degree to which the following factored into the manner in which each period character fulfilled his mission: (a) depth and quality of soil, (b) location and potential uses of water or its absence, (c) climatic cycles, and (d)

unique topographical or physical features such as the density of forests and height of mountain ranges. The value of this particular measurement is manyfold. Overall, this writer believes that being able to express oneself with the spoken word is as important as it is with the written word.

In addition to addressing the importance of the spoken word, this measurement also planned for a form of cooperative learning to take place. Operating as part of a group, each student had the opportunity to make a singular and unique contribution to the whole, thus enabling him or her to use his or her imagination to some degree and actually "own" the results, making what was learned more personal and thus furthering the chances for the information to be internalized as opposed to just memorized. Furthermore, this type of activity planned to focus on the *why* of events rather than just on the fact that they occurred. The four characteristics mentioned above are composites of the essential factors that ancient peoples considered when making political, social, and economic decisions.

The measurement of the third objective was also planned to be a group effort. In the end, each group planned to submit a written report, describing, defending and justifying the decisions it made relative to the influence of things geographic upon the political, social, and economic development of a mythological country (see Appendix F). This was planned to be the written component of the overall

assignment. The product was planned to be the result of a group effort, incorporating the advantages of cooperative learning mentioned above. This approach was planned to incorporate and expand upon the process utilized in the measurement of the second objective in that students capitalize upon the skills and information they have already acquired, combining it with a sense of imagination and creativity, then broadening their focus to envision and analyze the development of a country, albeit a fictional one. This approach planned to enable a student to have some degree of control over and have fun with the learning process: he or she is integrating knowledge; intellectual prowess and abilities with his or her inventive resourcefulness to master facts and details in a manner that has elements of challenge and ingenuity to it in and in a fashion that was planned to be more personal, thus allowing for the information to be more internalized and meaningful. This process also planned to have the added benefit of making a history class a vibrant and exciting place, which, for many students, it is often not.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Sifting through and appraising the large body of information from which emerged the solution necessitates keeping the mind's eye sharply focused on the nature of the problem; namely, that this writer's ninth grade World History class was unable to locate sites in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt regarded that are considered historically significant nor did they have the knowledge necessary to understand the influence of things geographic upon the historical development of these two ancient civilizations.

McConaghy (1990) takes the position that there is no question geography ought to be an integral part of any good history course, but goes to lengths to define the form it should take. History teachers, he says, need to be "new minded teachers" (McConaghy, 1990, p. 648) meaning they must be teachers who "see all human beings as members of the same human family, inhabiting the same planet" (McConaghy, 1990, p. 648). This approach will enable students to establish a realistic sense of continuity with those who preceded present Man, whether it be in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Washington, D.C.

This approach coincides nicely with the sentiments of those educators in California who put together the document Geography in the California Framework in 1988: Beyond knowing the names and locations of important historical sites, students "should acquire an understanding of the interaction between human behavior and the physical environment in . . . shaping history. (History-Social Science Framework, 1988, p. 24).

Spatial concepts as they pertain to the notion of change are the chief beneficiaries of incorporating geography into a history course, according to the position taken by deLeeuw (1972). While it may be true that the notion of change is, in itself, a mental construct, when expressed in histo-geographic terms, "it does allow students to see patterns . . . rather consistent patterns that have existed since Man could record his behavior; change does have regularity, rate and direction" (deLeeuw, 1972, p. 18).

In addition to considering those concepts which might serve to make up the structure of the solution, the appropriate approach to implementing that solution must also be considered. The work of Wragg and Allen (1982) presents a rather unique and inventive approach. Once the appropriate historical and geographical raw facts and germane details are demonstrably mastered, the teacher presents alternative propositions to the already known results; a sort of "what would happen if . . . " approach. This process not only forces a student to review what facts he or she has already

mastered, but it also forces him or her to muster what he or she knows about the immediate causes which influenced those results, particularly things geographic, and adapt them in much more imaginative terms.

In addition to being able to master the skills necessary to read, interpret and use maps, one must also be extremely familiar with the names of specific locations. One method of accomplishing this is simply to memorize. But Forsyth (1988) suggests there is a better way than just rote memorization; even better than "drawing color coded maps and using push pins" (Forsyth, 1988, p. 11). He suggests that the teacher assign to each student a journey for a traveler to take from one established location to another established location. The student must describe those geographic features that distinguish each location as well as the items, events and circumstances of nature the traveler might encounter as he or she is en route.

Forsyth goes on to mention that there are many different approaches a student might take to present his findings including drawings, overhead projections, or even something sculpted. The central requirement is that each presentation must include an accurate map.

From these solutions emerged the solution that was applicable to the problem and the population the proposal addressed. From purely an ideological point of view, it was important to address the concept of spatial relationships, for it allows for the notion of patterns to become evident.

While being able to know and understand patterns, as they relate to the integration of geography and history is crucial, it was not the solution, for it is limited in scope and did not lend itself easily to an activist approach; it tended to make the solution more theoretical for the intended population at which the proposal was aimed.

A solution that went beyond mere rote memorization and incorporated a good deal of creative student involvement was more appropriate for the target population. For example: once the known circumstances that describe why a particular location was chosen to be the site for whatever the activities were that occured there, are mastered, some of the elements that serve to make up the results, could be artificially altered, forcing a student to chose relevant alternative circumstances that would yield the same results, or, if no appropriate alternative circumstances can be found, then quite different results. In any event, activities of this nature engaged a student's imagination more and allow him or her to stretch his or her intellectual abilities beyond just a reminiscent function.

Knowing how to read a map as well as knowing the names of key sites and where they are located is essential. But as a solution, in and of itself, to the problem this proposal is meant to address, this falls short for it suggests just memorization; there is nothing particularly engaging or dynamic about memorization. The knowledge is important and so is the skill, but both needed to be connected with

activities described in this Report which allowed students to see there is a larger value to mastering the knowledge and the skill than just for its own sake.

Description of Solution Selected

The solution ultimately chosen to address the problem of geographic illiteracy had, as its central aim, the creation of a practical methodology for integrating geography into ninth grade World History classes. To this end, it was imperative that students become extremely familiar with historical facts. The mastery of these facts was first demonstrated before the component dealing with things geographic was introduced and incorporated.

The proposal suggested a combination of ideas aimed at making the process by which ninth grade students incorporate geography into their World History course active in nature, rather than passive. Once the appropriate historical information was demonstrably mastered, teacher-assigned groups of students, 5 groups of 4 students each and 1 group of 3 students, were assigned to assume the role of one of the

following prototypical characters of the times (3500 to 1500 BC): a) a skilled artisan, seeking that location which offers the best natural resources from which to make sculpting material and which also provides the best natural resources to provide color pigment for his paints as well as a market for his products; b) a land surveyor, hired by a business firm whose home office is in a large,metropolitan city, seeking the best transportation routes between the home office and other principal cities; c) an official agent of the government seeking the best locations for government outposts to serve both military and regulatory purposes; d) a farming family attempting to locate the ideal area in which to settle and establish family roots; and e) a businessman seeking to locate that area where the prospects for commercial expansion look very good.

Each group assumed a different character each week for three weeks. One of those weeks was devoted to Mesopotamian characters another to Egyptian characters. The third week concentrated upon both Mesopotamia and Egypt, but each in contrast with the other. The rotation followed a pattern established by the teacher. On an assigned day, each group presented its findings as to the manner in which each period character utilized any of the four criteria mentioned previously to fulfill his mission. By the time this process was concluded, each student was intimately familiar with the characters his or her group assumed and, by direct observation, very familiar with the remaining characters.

Each group had a teacher appointed spokesperson. Each spokesperson described the major issues with which each of the characters was confronted in order to fulfill his mission, with particular emphasis upon things geographic, particularly a) depth and quality of soil, b) location and potential uses of water, or its absence, c) climatic cycles, and d) unique topographical and physical features such as the density of forests and the height of mountains.

Upon completion of the oral presentations, the class was regrouped by the teacher into four groups of five students and one group of three students. The task of each group was to prepare a written report in which an analysis and description of the political, social and economical development of the mythological country might have occured between 3100 and 1500 BC using the geographical and statistical information provided (see Appendix F). Each group was allowed to give the mythological country a name of its own choosing. On an appointed day, the spokesperson for each group made a 10 minute presentation describing, in overview, the results each group formulated.

The process of assuming a period character followed by a written report allowed for a cooperative and an interactive learning experience. Each student had the opportunity to integrate what he or she read with what he or she saw and heard. Those who are auditory learners and those who are visual learners were both accommodated. This approach enabled each student to not only be extremely well acquainted

with the names and locations of the principle historical sites in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt but also the historical development of each; it also enabled each student to do so by an operational and a functional means rather than just a memorization means: he or she internalized the information. Furthermore, because the *modus operandi* was activist oriented, designed to allow for the actual engagement of the student, each student's understanding of the influence of things geographic upon significant historical developments in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt had greater depth and breadth. History became a living thing.

The role of the writer, as teacher, was to keep records, direct, guide and facilitate. It is probably more accurate to describe the leadership role of the writer as coach. As such, the writer did NOT serve as he who imparts factual information. Student's were directed and guided as to where information might be found and suggestions were made as to how it might all be organized, assimilated and synthesized, but the coach did not bestow facts.

Report of Action Taken

The over-all strategy was to incorporate geography into a ninth grade World History course. Organized on a week-by-week basis for twelve weeks, the plan for implementation of the solution required rather strict adherence to the calendar plan. There were slight deviations on occassion, but not enough to interfere with the overall plan; in fact, the deviations made the entire experience more enriching.

During the first month (the first four weeks), the focus was upon the historical development of Mesopotamian civilizations. Additional attention was paid to learning how to read, interpret and use general as well as special purpose maps. The combination of textbook and maps as well as seeing appropriate films, exposed students to the fundamental interdependency and interrelationship of geography and historical events.

Week One:

Specific attention was paid to those circumstances, both historical and geographical, which accounted for Sumer and Ur being among the first permanent cities in Mesopotamia with particular focus on the configuration of climate, the location of water, both fresh and salt, and the migratory patterns of Indo-Europeans toward the end of the Neolithic

period, around 3700 BC. Further attention was paid to the basic components of a topographical map and how scale, projection, and grid factor into reading it. The film Civilization and Climate was shown to help clarify the role climate played in the establishment of permanent settlements. Students took a great deal of notes during this week as the bulk of the information was taught by lecture and demonstration.

Week Two:

The relationship between climate and natural geographic features on the one hand and the development of organized religion and principle cultural values on the other, relative to Mesopotamian civilizations, was the focus of activities the second week. How the complete and utter dependency upon the forces of Nature contributed to the creation of deities and the rather elaborate rituals surrounding their invocation was discussed in addition to the development of a rather fixed and inflexible system of cultural values and social mores. Beyond the code of the Sumerian chief Ur-Nammu and the later code of the Babylonian chief Hammurabi, there is not an abundance of primary source information. The format of presentation was largely lecture. It became clear that most students never quite realized there was a connection between religion and geography and most seemed fascinated by it.

The orignial proposal called for additional exercises in reading and understanding special purpose maps during this week. It was determined by the teacher that more time needed to be spent discussing how topography and climate influenced the establishment of formal religious practices and cultural ethics; that, in the final analysis, this would have greater impact and lasting value, particularly when it came time to create the mythological country, mentioned in Week Ten. The results indicated this was a wise move.

Week Three

From examining the specific localities of the first permanent settlements in Mesopotamia, the focus shifted to more regional matters and specific historical periods: the Old Babylonian, Hittite, and Assyrian periods in particular. Concentration was placed upon using the basic assumptions made about how the configuration of past Indo-Eurpoean migration patterns, soil, climate and the location of water, factored into the establishment of permanent settlements, and expanded it to encompass a greater region for a longer period of time. In addition, how the dependency upon the forces of Nature for sustenance shifted in favor of trade and commerce and how that, in turn, created different religious and cultural values was explored. Seeing the film Habitat helped foster a greater appreciation for the manner in which trade and commerce both affected and was affected by the decisions made relative to where Man settled.

Week Four:

Territorial expansion and military invasions within ancient Mesopotamia and the influence of geographical features to that end was the focus of matters this week. The Babylonian Revival, and the impact of expanded transportation routes vis-a-vis its location received the most attention. The manner in which geographic conditions influenced the direction of the expanded transportation routes and the emergence of the Chaldeans was examined. Beyond that, how the geographic features unique to both the northeastern quadrant and southwestern quadrant of ancient Mesopotamia factored into the offensive military strategy employed by the Persian invaders as well as the defensive military strategy attempted by the Chaldean and later Babylonian defenders.also received attention. Most students thought this fascinating and seemed to actually like the lectures.

The orignial proposal called for examining special purpose maps again, with an eye toward how they would more graphically illustrate how unique geographic features like the location of steep cliffs and flowing water would contribute to military strategy. The basic topographical maps mentioned above proved adequate in this regard,however, so the notion of additional work with special purpose maps was dropped.

On Monday of this week, students were placed into the teacher-assigned groups mentioned above. Specifically: six groups were formed; five groups of four students each and one group of three students each. Each group was assigned one of the six period characters mentioned previously.

Class time on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this was devoted to allowing each group to assimilate and synthesize the information it collected, enabling each to assume the particular assigned character and then describe those variables, geographic in particular, which would allow each to fulfill his mission in ancient Mesopotamia. On Friday,the teacher-appointed spokesperson for each group made an eight minute oral presentation to the class regarding its findings.

Watching the groups work was pure delight for this writer. It was one of those often-read-about but seldom-actually-happens experiences. The students stayed on task the entire time! They used all the information at their disposal to decide how each period character would fulfill his mission: classnotes, assigned textbooks and supply textbooks, maps as well as information from the media center. They got excited and engaged themselves completely in the task at hand. They seemed to savor those moments when they could use their imagination and blend it with historical fact to solve the problem. It should be noted that information about topsoil, its types and depth, as it may have been in

ancient times was difficult to locate, as was accurate information about ancient climatic cycles and the density of forests. Most of the time, in this regard, students simply had to speculate using modern information.

The oral presentations were excellent! Each had an element of competition in it, which added an air of excitement to each presentation; in fact this entire exercise had a flair to it that both reflected and created a certain attitude of elation among students.

In the original proposal it was mentioned that during the second month (the second four weeks) a continuation of previously learned map skills would continue. At this point, the teacher determined that the map skills learned to this point were sufficient and that time was better spent concentrating upon the skills necessary to assimilate and integrate information. During the next four weeks, each teacher-assigned student group continued to assume a different period character following the pattern mentioned above; each continued to make its oral presentation. At this juncture, however, the focus shifted from ancient Mesopotamia to ancient Egypt. Because there is more information contained in the historical record about ancient Egypt than about ancient Mesopotamian civilizations, there was much more data to examine. The skill of integrating and synthesizing information was focused upon with pointed concentration upon

the patterns that lead to ancient Egypt being the stable, relatively peaceful civilization it was, especially when compared to ancient Mesopotamian civilizations.

In addition to integrating and synthesizing information, attention was also paid to the skill of compare and contrast. Ancient Egypt and ancient Mesopotamian civilizations, taken in toto, came to different conclusions and made different decisions regarding matters ranging from political traditions and religious customs to commercial practices and cultural values. An examination and review of historical facts learned to date helped clarify those differences.

Week Five

The focus this week was upon an overview of the six historical periods of ancient Egypt. In addition, an overview of the interrelationship of natural geographic features, particularly the location of fresh running water and climatic cycles, with religion, most notably the worship of the Pharaoh and the Osiris legend, that resulted in specific uses of land, particularly with respect to agriculture and transportation routes, received attention. As before, with respect to Mesopotamian civilizations, the map skills concentrated on the location of significant political and religious sites and the unique geographic features which contributed to that significance.

The film Egypt: Quest for Eternity enabled students to better appreciate the fundamental precepts of Egyptian religious belief, its connection with geographic conditions and how all of that developed into a well defined system that permeated every facet of ancient Egyptian society.

Students were not that pleased with having to subject themselves to another series of lectures and readings what with all the activity last week. They were looking forward to the next round of presentations.

Week Six

Egypt continued to be the focus this week. The original proposal called for concentrating on the influence of geography upon the development of commercial and cultural centers. The intent was to use the same concepts involved concerning the influence of geography upon the development of religious and political practices and apply them to the development of things commercial and cultural. However, it was difficult for most students to tolerate the ambiguity created by the fact that religious matters, cultural matters, commercial matters and political matters all were essentially interdependent upon and intertwined around one another in ancient Egypt; that seldom was there a clean, clear distinction between cultural values, the religious system, and politics. It was necessary for the teacher to go to great lengths to explain the concept of interdependency and how it applied to ancient Egypt viz-a-vis the areas

mentioned. In the end, it was not clear that all students fully grasped all of the issues at hand, but it seemed to became clearer for most as they prepared for oral presentations.

Week Seven

This week saw a continuation of addressing the nature of interdependency in ancient Egypt with a move toward integrating information regarding the interrelationship of politics, religion, and the social structure, as they influenced art and architecture. The orignial proposal called for additional focus on how the location of fresh water, climatic cycles, the amount and location of arid land, would influence things military. It was determined by the teacher that this notion had received ample attention earlier, but more importantly, the teacher concluded that time spent concentrating on enabling students to understanding the concepts of interdependency and interrelationship was of more value. Seeing the film Pyramid and subsequent discussion helped students see how the concepts were translated into action in ancient Egypt.

As it was during the fourth week, relative to Mesopotamia, students were divided into character groups, but this time assuming Egyptian characters. The teacher saw to it that no one repeated the same character and a new individual was appointed speaker. The original proposal called for oral presentations to be made Friday. However,

given the amount of attention paid to discussing the concepts of interrelationsips and interdependency, each group had the opportunity to meet only on Friday, making for one more group meeting on Monday of Week Eight. Oral presentations were made on Tuesday of the same week.

Week Eight

The original proposal called for the concentration this week to be upon the process of compare and contrast. This happened, but was modified somewhat to allow for the unfinished work of last week. This did not cause any disruption of plans. The presentations were met with the same enthusiasm as was the case with the Mesopotamian period characters. Students were elated to be able insert a bit of ingenuity as they demonstrated their new-found knowledge. And the teacher continued to be elated at their elation. Once presentations were completed, the last three days of the week were devoted to comparing and contrasting Mesopotamian and Egyptian political structures, religious practices and social institutions, and the influence of the unique natural geographical features upon the development of those structures, institutions and practices. How climatic cycles, the availability of fresh flowing water and the geographic location of deserts, mountain ranges and forests helped determine the location of religious, commercial and cultural sites was the primary focus based on the underlying theme of how these variables contributed to the creation of a

predictable orderly and stable society in ancient Egypt but not so in ancient Mesopotamia. The original proposal called for some attention to be given to the very different types and kinds of deities in each civilization, but it was determined by the teacher that this could be omitted without any compromise to the integrity of the proposal.

At the conclusion of the seventh week, then, all students were exposed to and became familiar with the challenges each of the six period characters faced from both a Mesopotamian and an Egyptian point of view, as he set out to fulfill his mission. The original proposal also mentioned that during the eighth week, on Monday, three of the groups, at the teacher's direction, would form one large group and would be assigned one of the six period characters in Mesopotamia. Three other groups would also form a second large group and would be assigned the same period character but in Egypt. Continuing the theme of compare/contrast, each group, after having been assigned a speaker by the teacher, would speak to the challenges that lie before their respective period character and the reasons for his decisions, but from the perspective of contrast to his counterpart. It called for presentations to be made on Friday with each speaker having eight minutes to make his or her presentation. Given the adjustments that had to be made during the eighth week, this activity was carried over and incorporated into activities for the ninth week.

The third month (the last four weeks) focused upon synthesizing and integrating information. The aligning of historical fact and geographic detail was accentuated as this segment drew to a close.

Week Nine

In addition to concentrating upon synthesizing, integrating and reviewing, at the teacher's direction, three of the groups mentioned above formed one large group and assigned a Mesopotamian period character. Three other groups formed another single large group and was assigned an Egyptian period character. Each group had to describe, through the teacher-appointed spokesperson, the challenges that lie before their respective period character and how those challenges were met, but from the perspective of contrast to his counterpart. The Mesopotamian character was was an official agent of the government seeking the best locations for government outposts to serve both military and regulatory functions. The Egyptain character was a land surveyor, hired by a business firm and seking the best transportation routes between Memphis (the home office) and the Nubian tribes located at the headwaters of the Nile. Each speaker described the challenges inherent in fulfilling his mission, but in terms of how it contrasted with how his counterpart might do the same, concentrating particularly on

things geographic. Most students seemed to enjoy this phase of the oral presentations, but it was evident that some were also tiring of it; it was becoming rather commonplace. Some students got confused at having to do this exercise from a contrasting point of view. It seems as if this was one of those exercises that is well intented and looks good on paper, but whose practical worth, at least in these circumstances, is open to question.

The map reading skills learned early on, specifically: being able to determine the height of mountains, the depth of valleys, the size of fresh flowing water, the density of forests and the extent of deserts, was incorporated into what was learned about the historical facts relative to the determination of the location of centers of government, religion, agriculture, transportation routes (both land and water) and centers of commerce in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt. As has been the case in the past, this exercise needed to be extended into the tenth week.

Week Ten

The original proposal called for this week to be devoted to preparation for the written report about the historical development of the mythological country using already provided geographic facts and demographic statistics (see Appendix F) as well as subsequent oral presentations outlining the substance of that report which was to be made by the designated spokesperson for each group. It was

determined by the teacher that this would not take the original time allotted so the activities of Week Nine were carried over into this week with no compromise to the original plan. The report concerning the mythological country was the result of a group effort, so the class was regrouped to form four groups of five students each and one group of three students. Major emphasis was placed on the process of writing a report: organization of the form as well as of the content.

It was fortunate that this did not take as much time as originally anticipated because it gave class time to discuss the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which was beginning to occur at this time. What political boundaries would be where and why was a major source of discussion. Students were able to easily grasp why the political boundaries were located where they were relative to things geographic. Students were also quick to grasp how geography contributed to the vast differences in culture and religion among many of the member states of what was about to become the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Some discussion was devoted to the fighting in Yugoslavia and how much of its cause is religious and cultural. This proved to take more time than was thought, so additional time was scheduled to discuss this during Week Eleven.

Week Eleven

The focus of attention this week was upon writing the rough draft of the report mentioned previously. There were a total of five reports (one from each group), each word-processed or typewritten. During the week, the teacher spent a good deal of time providing imput to each group enabling it to stay focused and avoid getting either too broad or too narrow.

One group got terribly ambitious during the course of preparing for this exercise and decided to actually make a topographical map illustrating this mythological country. This was entirely unsolicited from the teacher. It proved to be a little more formidable than anticipated; the biggest challenge being drawing it to scale. The final product was drawn on an overhead transparency so all could benefit from this group's initiative. It was well received.

Some degree of attention was paid to how to deliver an effective speech, with attention to such matters as having an introduction, body and conclusion; eye contact, posture, volume, and avoiding pitfalls like prolonged "uh's", and hackneyed and trite phrases.

Given the importance of what was discussed last week relative to what was happening in Yugoslavia, it was decided by the teacher to devote only a small portion of time to how to deliver an effective speech and concentrate on what was happening in that part of Europe, as it lended itself quite well as a current example of much of what had been discussed

about the influence of geography upon historical development. The teacher was able to secure some old maps of central Europe from the social studies storeroom as well as copies of topographical maps of the same area from the media center. After locating the central cities, waterways and mountains on the topographical map, students indicated the location of centers of industry and agriculture on a piece of clear overhead projection film taken from a political map. Students then superimposed the political map on the topographical map. After watching the television news it became a clear to students why who was fighting whom for what and where. It proved to be an excellent way of illustrating the concept of "the more things change, the more they don't".

Week Twelve

This was the week of evaluation. On Monday,the designated spokesperson from each of the five groups made an eight minute oral presentation outlining the substance of the report his or her group wrote. On Tuesday, each group received on oral critique from the teacher indicating what would put the finishing touches on the report. On Wednesday, under test conditions, on a map of the ancient world, students were asked to locate 21 major sites. The five written reports from each group was due on Thursday. On Friday of this week the teacher shared his findings with his students. Each student received the results of his or her map test and a written commentary with a numerical grade

regarding his or her contribution to the written group report.

It was clear that at thispoint students were growing a little weary of all this critiqueing. There was some evidence of relief that the entire project was coming to an end. At the same time, there was some expression of how much they enjoyed the interactive/cooperative exercises and looked forward to more.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Overall, the results were very encouraging. As mentioned previously, the first objective concerned itself with being able to locate sites that are regarded as having historical significance in the ancient worlds of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Specifically, on two different maps, one of ancient Mesopotamia and the other of ancient Egypt, students were expected to locate and identify 17 of the 21 sites held to be of historical prominence. When the figures on Tables 4 and 5 are compared with the earlier figures on Tables 2 and 3, the improvement is markedly revealing; out of a possible 21 total points, the average score was 18 points.

Table 4

Number of Students Having Correct Responses on Map Test of Ancient Mesopotamia After Implementation of Proposal

Location	Out of 23 Students, The Number of Students Having the Correct Response
Ur	15
Susa	14
Euphrates River	23
Assyria	17
Niniveh	19
Akkad	15
Babylon	20
Tigris River	23
Syria	19
Babylonia	20
Sumer	21

Table 5

Number of Students Having Correct Responses on the Map Test of Ancient Egypt After Implementation of Proposal

Location	Out of 23 Students, The Number of Students Having the Correct Response
Thebes	21
Abydos	17
Memphis	20
Libya	22
Nubia	16
Valley of the Kings	18
Akhetaton	16
Nile River	23
Luxor	21
Karnak	20

The second behavioral objective concerned itself with acquiring sufficient knowledge to be able to accurately describe the impact and contribution of things geographic upon the historical development of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt. Specifically,students were to describe the role of a) fertile soil, b) water, c) climatic cycles, and d) unique topographical and geographical features [density of forests, height of mountains, etc.] in determining the location and development of sites in ancient Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt regarded as having historical significance. As the results on Table 6 indicate, out of a possible 29 total points, the average score was 21 points.

Table 6

Average Points the Total Number of Students Earned for Oral Presentation Describing the Impact of Geography Upon History

Geographic Feature	Total Possible Points	Average Points Earned by Total Number of Students
Depth and Quality of Soil	7	6
Location and Potential Uses of Water	7	6
Climatic Cycles	7	4
Unique Physical Features	8	5

Note. Maximum points = 29.

aTotal mean average points = 21

The third objective concerned itself with assimilating knowledge learned about geography and map reading with historical outcomes. Specifically, from one list containing the geographic facts, and another list containing the demographic statistics of a mythical country, students were to describe the manner in which geography would influence what each perceived would be the political structure, social/cultural institutions and economic practices of that mythological country between 3000 BC and 1500 BC. As Table 7 indicates, out of a possible 50 total points, the average score was 37 points.

Table 7

Average Points the Total Number of Students Earned for Written Analysis Describing the Historical Development of Mythological Country

Category	Total Possible Points	Average Points Earned by Total Number of Students
Political Structure	16	13
Social/Cultural Institutions	17	14
Economic Practices	17	11

Note. Maximum Points = 50

aTotal mean average points = 38

Table 8

Total Points Earned By Each Student on the Entire Exercise

Student	Total Points Earned
1	93
2	85
3	83
4	90
5	91
6	88
7	90
8	84
9	87
10	93
11	91
12	78
13	87
14	83
15	80
16	67
17	90
18	85
19	77
20	86
21	88
22	81
23	98

Note. Total Possible Points = 100

aTotal Average Points = 86

Discussion

As the Calendar Plan in Chapter IV indicates, the actual period of implementation was able to adhere to the original plan almost on an item-by-item basis. As always seems the case in the best-laid plans, however, there is always some unforseen contingency that calls for some creative adjustments. Fortunately, none of these created the need for any serious readjustment of the original scheme for implementation.

For this writer, implementation of the orignial proposal carried with it a hint of diffidence and trepidation, what with the combination of never having tried anything of this sort before and some colleagues watching with a somewhat critical eye. As the implementation progressed and its success became apparent, it became somewhat of a challenge to resist being a little smug and boastful. In the main, however, watching each student tap his or her sense of ingenuity and creativity outweighed any element of competition that might have existed.

In the beginning there was a degree of resistance from some students about the degree of attention being paid to things geographic. All seemed to understand and accept the notion that map reading and being able to locate specific places on a map might have some merit, but there was some

resistance at having to focus on matters that dealt more specifically with geography, like soil fertility, the location of water and whether it was brackish, salt or fresh and the direction in which it flowed as well as the type, kind and duration of climatic cycles, the density of forests, and the elevation of mountains. But as the Calendar Plan approached the creation of the mythological country, all that had been complained about suddenly became extremely useful.

It was with nothing but pure pleasure as this writer observed students taking the initiative during the time devoted to creating the mythological country. Most were a little hesitant at first, for it seems it had not been their experience to utilize imagination and blend it with fact to create something. While the classroom itself often appeared to be in complete chaos and disarray what with students milling about, comparing and contrasting information with one another or checking information in textbooks or maps, more learning seemed to occur than even most of them realized.

Again, it was simply pure delight, given this writer's state of anxiety, to see the anticipated outcomes, as described in the original proposal, come to fruition. The results confirm the findings of Natoli (1988) and Salter (1988) who, in separate studies, outlined the importance of incorporating geography into social studies courses. More importantly, however, the success of realizing the objectives illustrated the significance of an interactive classroom. When students are asked to assimilate facts and intellectual

knowledge with imagination and originality, learning seems to have a greater depth; greater internalization, perhaps.

Because the creation of the mythological country occurred at the same time as the dissolution of the old Soviet Union and the civil wars in Yugoslavia, the class was able to incorporate current events with history with geography. It was actually fun (in the most professional sense) for this writer to be able to allow students to see first-hand the impact things geographic have upon political decision making; that, in effect, the more things change, the more they don't; that, indeed, history does work in cycles.

Recommendations

1. Omit the extended use of special purpose maps. Those that lend themselves well to illustrating the use of scale and topography are sufficient. Copies of maps from Maps on File and Historical Maps on File are not suitable for this purpose, but copies made from atlases are just fine.

2. The time spent on developing the skills of assimilation,and synthesis was invaluable.

3. Addressing the concepts of interdependency and interrelationships proved to be invaluable, as well. Students seem to have very little awareness of cause and effect relationships or that events do not occur in a vacuum.

4. Include more current events. The more there is a connection between "then" and now, the more students have the opportunity to understand the nature of cycles and patterns in history.

5. The notion of seeing events from the perspective of another is a noble idea and certainly has merit, but within the confines of this proposal, it proved to be not that effective. Asking students to see the Mesopotamian reason for doing things from an Egyptian point of view served to make matters a little too vague for students.

6. Oral presentations have a place, but in this proposal, it bordered on being overdone. Keep them in balance with written exercises.

7. The more learning is interactive and cooperative within the classroom, the better. Students became more engaged and took more initiative, bordering on having some

measure of control and therefore interest in their education.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum have been shared with the building principal, the chairman of the social studies department, and one other colleague who teaches a similar world history course. All have expressed interest in this approach to incorporating geograpy effectively into the world history course, indicating that when the course structure for the next academic year is reviewed this coming spring, it would be advantageous to investigate how this practicum might become a formal part of the world history course.

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Appendix A

THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY UPON THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA AND ANCIENT EGYPT

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The location of Ur as a center of population in ancient Mesopotamia can largely be attributed to:

   a. the availability of a large labor force.
   b. the abundance of natural resources.
   c. its accessibility to established transportation routes.
   d. a long growing/harvest season.

2. One of the principle reasons Babylon became the capital of the Old Babylonian Empire was due to

   a. the large amount of wealthy landowners living in the vicinity.
   b. the abundance of materials used for the construction of royal palaces.
   c. it being a center of commerce for those who travelled by land as well as by sea.

d. the protection offered by nearby mountains and dense forests.

3. Maintaining and controlling the Old Babylonian Empire was made difficult because

a. one region was having its harvest while another was having its dry season.
b. the peoples inhabiting the river valleys had very different customs than the nomadic peoples living in plains.
c. the hunters who inhabited the dense forests were not used to a centralized government.
d. the large slave population was in a state of constant uprising.

4. In large measure, the delta region of the Nile was difficult to defend by the ancient Egyptians because

a. there are any number of tributaries of the Nile available for the attackers to use.
b. the Egyptian population was sparse in that area.
c. the height of dry-land knolls made it easy for the enemy to travel unnoticed.

d. the centers of commerce were only inhabited during the harvest season.

5. The unification of the Kingdom of the Upper Nile and the Kingdom of the Lower Nile into one centrally controlled empire was more easily accomplished than the city-states of the ancient Old Babylonian Empire because of the

a. easy accessibility to the different centers of production.
b. absence of any dense forests.
c. rather flat areas of land along the banks of the Nile.
d. immediate surrounding desert.

6. The location of Thebes as the capitol of a unified ancient Egypt can, in part, be attributed to

a. the amount of pyramids located on the outskirts of the city proper.
b. its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea.
c. it being central to east/west trade routes.
d. its particular location along the Nile.

7. The annual flooding of the Nile provided ancient Egyptians with a sense of

   a. fear and frustration as their crops washed away.
   b resignation, knowing they could do nothing to prevent it.
   c. permanence, continuity, regularity and security.
   d. utter and complete dependence upon the will of Pharaoh.

8. The royal mortuary temples in the Valley of the Kings was located on the west bank of the Nile because

   a. the sun sets in the west.
   b. ancient Egyptians did not want monuments to the dead located in Thebes, a city of the living.
   c. the western bank of the Nile is made of soil than can withstand the weight of great buildings, unlike the soil of the east bank.
   d. most of the raw materials used to make tombs was located on the west bank.

9. The greatest natural protection afforded ancient Egyptians was the

   a. great width of the river Nile.
   b. the frequency and amount of unpredictable rainfall.
   c. the surrounding desert.
   d. the large, well-equipped army of the Pharaohs.

10. The development of independent kingdoms in ancient Mesopotamia is, in part, attributed to

   a. a rather austere climate.
   b. the differences in the production of foodstuffs.
   c. the innate character of the inhabitants.
   d. dense forests and rugged mountain ranges.

11. The physical size of early ancient Egyptians city-states was necessitated by the

   a. range of centers of population.
   b. marginal fertility of the immediate territory.
   c. availability of natural resources.
   d. amount of rainwater and surface runoff that could be stored for use during the dry season.

12. Owing to its _____, Memphis emerged as a center of culture and commerce early in Egyptian history.

    a. central location to a large number of fertile valleys.
    b. large population.
    c. number of educated citizens.
    d. proximity to land and sea transportation routes.

13. The longevity of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, in part, can be attributed to

    a. the inordinate amount of attention paid to the development of military weaponry.
    b. exploiting natural resources.
    c. the sense of permanency provided by the natural surroundings.
    d. concentrating slave populations in key geographic locations.

14. One element which served as an important element of organized religion in ancient Egypt was

a. the dependence upon divine intervention to assure a desired outcome.

b. the connection between natural phenomena and things divine as integral parts of the cyclical nature of existence.

c. an acceptance of and dependence on mysterious miracles.

d. a reliance upon a clergy or priestly class to explain natural phenomena.

15. Religious observances in ancient Egypt were, in large measure, connected with

a. cyclical, natural phenomena.

b. reactions to unexpected events.

c. celebrations upon the completion of long projects involving the exploitation of natural resources.

d. the annexation of smaller but strategically significant countries.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF SITES TO LOCATE IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

On the attached map of ancient Mesopotamia, locate the following:

Ur	Babylon
Susa	Tigris River
Akkad	Euphrates River
Assyria	Syria
Sumer	Niniveh
	Babylonia

APPENDIX C

LIST OF SITES TO LOCATE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

On the attached map of ancient Egypt, locate the following:

Thebes	Valley of the Kings
Abydos	Akhetaton
Memphis	Nile River
Libya	Luxor
Nubia	Karnak

APPENDIX D

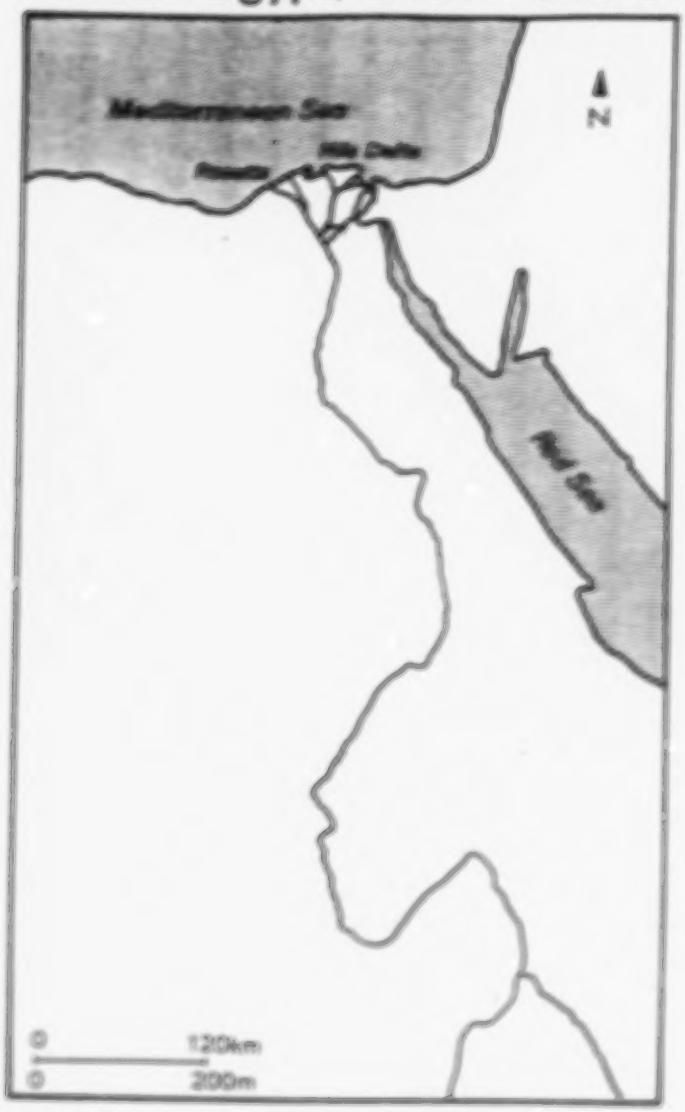
ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA 3100 BC - 1600 BC

Ancient Mesopotamia, 3100 B.C.-1600 B.C.

APPENDIX E

ANCIENT EGYPT 3100 BC-1085 BC

Ancient Egypt, 3100-1085 B.C.



APPENDIX F

LIST OF GEOGRAPHIC FACTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS FOR MYTHOLOGICAL COUNTRY

Geographic Features

Total Land Area	7000 sq. miles
Total Water Area	600 sq. miles
Rivers and Lakes	185 sq. miles
Total Population	120,000
Yearly Average Precipitation	8 inches
Seasonal:	
Fall	7 inches
Winter	9 inches
Spring	11 inches
Summer	4 inches
Yearly Average Temperature	74 degrees Fahrenheit
Seasonal:	
Fall	71 degrees
Winter	57 degrees
Spring	78 degrees
Summer	88 degrees
Highest Point	12300 feet above sea level

Distinguishing Features

A. Country is bordered on the west by a large body of salt water.

B. Country is bordered on the north by a large, volcanic mountain chain, running on an east-west axis, consisting of steep, jagged rock and dense, hardwood forest, numerous cinder cones, many of which are filled with freshwater. Only one volcano is active.

C. The eastern border is another large mountain chain, running on an north-south axis. It is also volcanic in nature, but with no active volcanoes. It is heavily forested. The country's highest peak, which is snow capped all year 'round, is located in this chain.

D. The southern border, running on an east-west axis, is desert.

E. The country has two principle rivers, one with a southerly flow, running from the northeast quadrant and heading toward the west coast where it meets with the other principle river, running from the southeast quadrant. Both rivers form an expansive delta area before emptying into the large body of salt water bordering on the west.

Demographic Features

A. Men outnumber women 7 to 1.

B. The infant mortality rate is 40%.

C. The leading cause of death is by natural causes.

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DATE: May 23, 1992

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RE: Practicum Report

Student: Henry Milton

Cluster: 38

Title: Improving the Awareness of the Influence of Geography Upon Historical Events in Ancient Mesopotamia and in Ancient Egypt in Ninth Grade World History Students

The report has _____ has not _____ been accepted for abstraction in ERIC.

_____
Signed

Accession Number _____